

# BORDER EAGLE

Laughlin Air Force Base • Texas

54th Year • No. 40 • October 6, 2006

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Airmen remove debris that could damage aircraft engine



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Base leaders get hands-on training on live-fire Wednesday



**Mission Capable Rates**

**T-1**  
91.7%

**T-6**  
96.9%

**T-38**  
81.1%

**AEF Stats**  
43 Deployed

14 Back in 30 days

0 Leaving in 30 days

Team XL's last DUI  
June 24, 2006  
It's a crime!



## Stepping back...

Two historic Red Baron Squadron biplanes give incentive rides to Laughlin Airmen in the skies over Del Rio Monday. The Red Barons are vintage "Stearman" biplanes able to perform acrobatic stunts and are the longest-running, non-military air show act in history.

See "Stepping back," pages 10 and 11

## Moody jets to get XL tail flash for IFF

By Kent Cummins  
Public Affairs

Laughlin AFB turned another page in its history book at 2 p.m. Wednesday with the touchdown of the first Introduction to Fighter Fundamentals T-38C Talon from Moody AFB, Ga..

"It's a historical moment," said Col. Mike Minahan, 47th Flying Training Wing commander. "This jet marks the beginning of Laughlin's transition to our newly acquired Introduction to Fighter Fundamentals mission."

Over the next six to eight months, Laughlin will welcome about 30 T-38 and T-6 Texan II aircraft as the result of mission gains due

to recent base realignment decisions.

The T-38s will be used to fulfill the base's new eight-week IFF course, which will be up and running by the summer of 2007. The course introduces pilots to air-to-air employment, air-to-surface attack and low-altitude navigation.

"The IFF course," said Col. Laro Clark, 47th Flying Training Wing vice commander, "enhances Laughlin's training by providing an introductory fighter training course that better prepares pilots to fly their follow-on fighters such as the F-16, F-15, A-10, and in the future F-22 [Raptor] and F-35 [Lightning II]."

More planes also mean

more people and economic impact for the region.

Over the next several months, about 180 military and civilian personnel will start calling the Del Rio area home. Including family members, it means about 400 new community members. This translates to a more than \$11 million dollar economic impact in just payroll and indirect jobs alone.

Laughlin's total economic impact for fiscal 2005 in its Economic Impact Region is valued at \$228 million.

Down the road, the new IFF mission will also require expanded instructional facilities, additional training airspace and access to a no-drop bombing range.



Moody planes touched down here Wednesday afternoon.

## Every unit needs strong leaders, followers

Great leaders plan, great followers execute to ensure a successful mission



**Commander's  
Corner**

**By Col. Lawra Lee**  
*47th Medical Group commander*

Leadership is big business. Analyzing it, dissecting traits of historical leaders, predicting who will be good leaders, what makes an effective leader, we spend a lot of time and effort devoted to "doing leadership."

The curricula of all levels of Professional Military Education are full of titles such as Leadership and Management; Leadership and Command; and Leadership and Ethics. The Air War College even has a Department of Leadership and Ethics and the Center for Strategic Leadership Studies. Google "books on leadership;" 131 million hits are returned. A search of Amazon.com yields 17 thousand entries. We devote a lot of time and effort developing this country's next generation of leaders; we also need to spend at least as much time developing good followership skills as well.

Google "books on followership" and a mere 69 thousand are returned. The same goes for Amazon.com with only 23 entries. Why has the examination of good followership received

such short shrift?

Well, followership isn't sexy. The intrinsic value of good followers isn't recognized until they aren't there and that in turn makes it more difficult for leaders—even the very best ones—to carry out their responsibilities.

As a society, we're losing sight of the fact that each one of us has a stake in the ultimate success of the group, that as a group we succeed, but as a group, we can also fail. The group needs strong leaders and equally strong followers. Being a good follower doesn't mean subjugating one's beliefs or principles, or being the proverbial "yes man."

What it does mean is understanding the big picture, the mission, and the important role one plays in the execution of that mission, either as a follower or a leader. It means understanding when the situation requires further discussion, and even healthy dissension. Opposing viewpoints are imperative; indeed, it's the follower's responsibility to appropriately voice them. It also means knowing when the time for discussion is over, and when it's time to get on with business.

The Secretary of Defense recently came under harsh criticism by many retired general officers, individuals who spent their entire lives supporting and defending the Constitution of the United States. The successful execution of our mission makes it absolutely imperative that we have a

strong cadre of followers who can effectively juggle when to voice dissent and when to salute smartly and execute.

In any given week, each of us moves from the leader to follower role and back hundreds of times without even knowing it. But it's in the role as "follower" where we frequently fall flat. Your senior leaders—including commanders, chiefs, first sergeants, NCOICs, your immediate supervisors—don't make critical decisions in a vacuum.

Excruciating analysis and discussion occurs before wing supplements to Air Force Instructions and changes to local operating instructions are made. And as followers, unless presented with evidence to the contrary, we need to trust our leaders made sound decisions, and to support them, as long as what's being asked doesn't constitute an unlawful order.

We understand leadership. We now need to turn our attention to the equally important concept of followership. "Humor in Uniform" in April's Reader's Digest presented the perfect anecdote. The writer recounted how during basic training, his platoon was given a choice of going to the gym or the PX. They voted on the PX. Their sergeant then told them they were going to the gym. "But Sarge," whined one recruit, "we took a vote." "Boys, let me explain," he said. "We're here to defend democracy, not practice it."

Great leaders can plan, but it takes equally great followers to successfully execute.

## BORDER EAGLE

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*Public Affairs chief*

**Tech. Sgt. Joel Langton**  
*Chief, Internal Information*  
**Senior Airman Austin May**  
*Staff writer/photographer*

**Senior Airman Olufemi Owolabi**  
*Editor*

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### Deadlines

News for the Border Eagle should be submitted to the 47th Flying Training Wing Public Affairs Office, Bldg. 338, Laughlin AFB, TX, 298-5262.

**Copy deadline is close of business each Thursday the week prior to publication.**

Submissions can be e-mailed to: [olufemi.owolabi@laughlin.af.mil](mailto:olufemi.owolabi@laughlin.af.mil) or [bordereagle@laughlin.af.mil](mailto:bordereagle@laughlin.af.mil).

### Advertising

Advertising should be submitted to the Del Rio News-Herald by 4 p.m. each Friday at 2205 Bedell, Del Rio, TX, 774-4611.

## Club XL's five-course dinner wows Laughlin

**By Susan Powell**  
*Community Support flight chief*

If you weren't at Club XL last Saturday night, you definitely missed out on what was probably the best dining experience Laughlin, or even Del Rio, has offered in a long time.

From the moment we arrived, we were immersed in a five-star atmosphere we've never experienced before in the two and a half years we've been in Del Rio. Greeted at the door with a "Good evening, Mr. and Mrs. Powell," we were escorted to our table which was perfectly situated in the dining room which immediately conveyed we were in for a treat much greater than we ever imagined. Everything about the ambience conveyed "elegance." As we were seated, I could-

n't help but watch and admire our servers as they provided other guests with another level of professional service. All I kept saying to myself was "wow...wow...wow...I can't believe how awesome our club and the staff look"...words I heard over and over throughout the evening.

As if the ambience wasn't enough, the five-course dinner added to the awesome experience. A different type of wine was served with each course. As the wine was poured, the server would tell us what type of wine it was and what dish we could expect next. Every course was a feast for the eyes and pleasing to the palate. From the orzo and scallop appetizer, to the avocado soup, and on through the dessert, our



## Actionline

Col. Mike Minahan  
47th Flying Training  
Wing commander



Call 298-5351 or email  
actionline@laughlin.af.mil

One way to work through problems that haven't been solved through normal channels is the Commander's Actionline.

Before you call in or e-mail an Actionline, please try to work out the problem through the normal chain of command or directly with the base agency involved.

When calling or e-mailing the Actionline, please keep messages brief and remember to include your name and phone number so you are assured of a timely personal reply. Contact information is also useful when additional information is needed to pursue your inquiry.

We will make every attempt to ensure confidentiality when appropriate.

If your question relates to the general interest of the people of Laughlin, the question and answer may also be printed in the Border Eagle.

Thanks for your cooperation, and I look forward to reading some quality ideas and suggestions.

The 47th Flying Training Wing's  
new mission statement:

**Through TEAMWORK  
and INNOVATION  
Train PROFESSIONAL  
Expeditionary  
Airpower Experts to  
Fight and Win  
America's Wars**

**CALL  
BAADD?  
GOOD CALL.  
298-HOME  
(4663)  
FRIDAYS & SATURDAYS  
10 P.M. TO 3 A.M.  
FREE TO ALL BASE PERSONNEL**

# National Fire Prevention week...

## 47th CES urges members to watch what they heat

By John Alexander  
47th Civil Engineer  
Squadron

Laughlin will celebrate National Fire Prevention Week Oct. 8 through Oct. 14.

This year's theme is "Prevent Cooking Fires. Watch What You Heat."

During this year's FPW, we hope to increase awareness of kitchen fires with our base and local residents so all will be involved in the long-term safety of our community.

The kitchen is the center of activity in most homes. It's the place where we make our meals, pay our bills, finish our homework, or chat over a cup of coffee. However, it can also be the most dangerous place in the home. According to the National Fire Protection Association, cooking fires are the number one cause of reported home fires and home fire injuries in the United States.

In 1999, cooking equipment was involved in 96,200 reported home structure fires, resulted in 331 deaths and 4,183 injuries nationwide. Property damage alone totaled \$511 million.

The recent increase in fires across the command is cause for concern for the safety of our personnel and resources. According to Fire Chief Charles Byrd at



Headquarters Air Education and Training Command, we have suffered 16 fire incidents this fiscal year. Six of those fires occurred in dormitories and four in military family housing units. Unattended cooking was the cause of more than half these fires.

Fortunately, there were no reported deaths or injuries. Most people prepare meals as a matter of

routine and don't concern themselves with what could go wrong. It's not that they don't care; they just don't think about it. Most fires involving cooking equipment start when food, grease, wall coverings, paper plates, curtains or other common household items ignite.

If a fire does occur, the damage may not be confined to a couple of pots and pans or the stovetop. I've been on

the scene when a fire has spread not only beyond the stove, but well beyond the kitchen. Lives are turned upside down when this much damage occurs, even if there are no serious injuries or deaths. It's painful to see families suffer such losses, especially since the majority of cooking fires don't have to happen. Cooking safety begins with the cook.

### Here are some safety tips to follow:

- Never leave cooking food on the stovetop unattended, and keep a close eye on food cooking inside of the oven.
- Keep cooking areas clean and clear of rags, towels, low-hanging drapes or curtains and other items that can burn.
- Enforce a 3-foot (1 meter) "kid-free" safety zone around the stove.
- Always keep a potholder, oven mitt and lid handy.
- Don't remove the lid until it is completely cool.
- Never pour water on a grease fire and never discharge a fire extinguisher onto a pan fire, as it can spray or scatter burning grease around the kitchen, spreading the fire.

If a fire occurs at your home, the Laughlin Fire Department will be there of course, but I'm sure you'd prefer us not to have to come at all. Cooking fires are preventable. That's why it's so important to use care when using any cooking appliance.

### Five-course dinner, from page 2

chefs delivered something I thought could only be had in a large market, upscale restaurant.

Congratulations to Dana Bovender, Club Manager, and his staff. They stepped it up to a new level and everyone took notice. Priced at only \$35 per couple (club members), this event embodied "value" to all who attended. According to Col. Roger Thrasher,

47th Mission Support Group commander, "The Club XL staff did a spectacular job hosting this first of many gourmet dinners - a five course meal, wines, service, and great friends made it an unbeatable combination. If anyone is looking for a fancy meal and super service at a reasonable price, this is certainly the event to come to!"

If you missed this event, don't fret. Club XL has more exciting programs planned that will not only feature great

food, but also great entertainment. When you see them advertised, however, you better hurry and make a reservation.

Seating will be limited, and you don't want to miss out. If you're not a club member, today would be a great day to join and start taking advantage of these great deals.

Call 298-5134, and they'll be happy to get a membership application to you.

# Bigger, better base housing on the way

By Kent Cummins  
Public Affairs

Bigger and better base housing is on the horizon for Laughlin Air Force Base members.

Laughlin is in the midst of a military housing privatization initiative which will give base families access to safe, quality, affordable, and well-maintained housing.

The 47th Mission Support Group Commander Col. Roger Thrasher said the initiative is really about quality of life and readiness.

"We are committed to ensuring our Airmen have the best," said Colonel Thrasher. "Excellent, well-maintained housing is an important element in military readiness. When Laughlin troops are deployed around the world, they don't need to be worried about their air conditioning not working or other problems with their home."

Colonel Thrasher said it also makes good fiscal sense for the Air Force.

"The Air Force housing privatization process not only provides new or renovated homes with better features, it saves Air Force funds, which can then be directed to other programs," said Colonel Thrasher. "It also saves the Air Force time, delivering homes sooner than through traditional MILCON (military construction.)"

According to the Air Force, today more than 38 percent of housing does not meet modern standards and requires either major improvement or replacement.

Housing privatization is geared to fix this challenge, said Tinker Valero, Laughlin's Housing Privatization Project manager.

"Privatized homes at Laughlin will offer more space, modern features, and additional amenities such as garages, hiking trails, and recreational facilities," said Mrs. Valero. "Rent will be based on basic allowance for housing rates and maintenance service will be provided 24/7, 365 days a year."

Laughlin will privatize 516 housing units which will be designated for occupancy by pay grade.

The member's rent will not exceed the BAH at the dependent rate for the designated military pay grade, minus an amount sufficient to cover 110 percent of average estimated utility charges. Rent includes refuse collection, water, sewer, and common area grounds maintenance.

"Whether they choose to live on or off base, military members, BAH will go toward housing," said Mrs. Valero. "They will also receive enough to cover average utility costs. As long as people are prudent with their use of electricity and water, they should not have out-of-pocket expenses for utilities."

Laughlin's privatization effort has been underway since April 2004 when the first project development team meeting took place. Evaluations of bid proposals by prospective developers is scheduled to take place in late fall 2006, with tentative transaction closure by August 2007. Normally, construction should begin six months to a year after transaction closure depending on the

construction plans outlined in the proposals.

"Once the developer takes over, he (she) agrees to bring homes up to Air Force standards through new construction or renovations within the development period," said Mrs. Valero. "The developer is responsible for operating and maintaining the homes for 50 years."

Mrs. Valero said "while circumstances may vary at each installation, demolition and renovation will usually begin on vacant units first in order to reduce the impact on families in occupied units."

There are many bases throughout the Air Force with "up and running" privatized developments, including Kirtland AFB, N.M., where Staff Sgt. Christopher Frost, a non-commissioned officer there, is impressed with the homes.

Sergeant Frost, a member of the 377th Air Base Wing, has lived in both old and new housing at Kirtland and "loves the new."

"The first thing I noticed with the new privatized housing is the size," said Sergeant Frost. "They are really spacious; the layout of the houses is more modern and open. I felt like I was living in a sardine can in the old housing. The other thing I really like is everything is new ... new appliances, new carpeting, and they also have garages."

Sergeant Frost said the BAH plus 10 percent for utilities is more than enough for his family.

"We usually come out ahead," the Sergeant said. "If your utilities come in below what you're allotted, you get to pocket the rest. I like that."

## Newslines

### Commissary announces holiday hours

The commissary will close on Monday and Tuesday in observance of the Columbus Day holiday.

The store will open from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Wednesday.

### AFPC lifts VAP suspense

The Air Force Personnel Center lifted the temporary suspension of voluntary assignment applications Oct. 1.

Voluntary assignment programs include: Base of Preference (BOP), follow-on/home-basing, join spouse, Voluntary Stabilized Base Assignment Program (VSBAP), Permission, CONUS Isolated and CONUS exchange programs.

Applications updated after Sunday (Oct. 8) will be processed in November.

The projected enlisted voluntary assignment application schedule for the remainder of 2006 is on the AFPC home page. AFPC will still work short notice follow on/home-basing requests and First Term Airman BOP requests (projected reenlistment within 60 days) on a case-by-case basis.

For questions, contact Tech. Sgt. Samantha Young at 298-5409.

### Laughlin manor undergoes renovation

Beginning Monday, the Laughlin Manor has closed one wing for three to four weeks in order to perform urgent repairs. Due to having a limited number of rooms, lodging will not make any Space A reservations more than three days in advance. If you are planning to have guests stay there during this time, you may need to confirm the availability of rooms.

For more information please call 298-5741.



Photo by Kent Cummings

## Proclamation....

47th Mission Support Group Commander Col. Roger Thrasher reads Del Rio's Domestic Violence Awareness Month Proclamation on Monday at City Hall with the Honorable Efrain Valdez, Del Rio mayor, as Marcela Ramirez, executive director of the Amistad Family Violence and Rape Crisis Center, looks on. The colonel and mayor signed the document which proclaims the month of October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month and urges all citizens to observe this month by becoming aware of the tragedy of domestic violence, participating in community efforts, and supporting those who are working toward its end.



**MAA newcomers welcome  
Set for Oct. 10 at Club XL**

The quarterly "Military Affairs Association Welcome" for Laughlin newcomers is 5 to 6 p.m. Oct. 10 at Club XL.

This MAA Welcome is for permanent party civilian and military members who have arrived at Laughlin since Aug. 29. Those who arrived before Aug. 29 and have not been to an MAA event are welcome to attend. The event is also for newcomers' family members, supervisors and commanders.

R.S.V.P. by calling 298-4036 or emailing [seth.butler@laughlin.af.mil](mailto:seth.butler@laughlin.af.mil) by Oct. 6. MAA needs a good count of who plans to attend in order to provide an appropriate amount of refreshments and food.

The next MAA Welcome for student pilots of Class 08-01 and Class 08-02 is slated for 5 p.m. Nov. 7.

**AETC needs volunteers to  
write USAFSE**

Air Education and Training Command is soliciting AETC chief master sergeants, and chief master sergeant selects to volunteer to write the USAFSE for two upcoming projects. Each is a 32-day TDY (plus travel time); the first is from 8 Jan 07 - 8 Feb 07, and the second is from 16 Jan 07 - 16 Feb 07, both at the Air Force Occupational Measurement Squadron, Randolph AFB TX. Only a few highly qualified senior NCOs are selected to participate as subject-matter experts in the test development process. Interested personnel should contact Staff Sgt. Deveck at extension 298-4820 for more information.

**Operation Return home**

All Laughlin Fiscal Year 2006 deployed returnees will be honored in a ceremony scheduled from 2 to 6 p.m. Oct. 13 at the base picnic grounds.

For more information, call 298-5251.



*Photo by Tech. Sgt. Joel Langton*

## FOD walk...

Nearly 1,000 Laughlin Airmen picked up trash along the 8,852 feet of runway here Sept. 29 morning. "The idea is to remove any debris that could find its way into an aircraft engine or cause a mishap," said Lt. Col. Dan Gernert, 47th Operations Group deputy commander. The walks are done quarterly, and all groups assigned to Laughlin participate in the walks.



# Laughlin Salutes

## Specialized Undergraduate Pilot Training Class 06-15 Award Winners

### AETC Commander's Trophy

1st Lt. David Underwood  
2nd Lt. Derek Marchlewicz

### Outstanding Officer

1st Lt. Ryan Vorhies

### Distinguished Graduates

1st Lt. David Underwood  
2nd Lt. Derek Marchlewicz  
2nd Lt. Benjamin Copley

### Outstanding 2nd Lt. Award

2nd Lt. Calvin Crouse III

### Flying Training Award

1st Lt. David Underwood  
2nd Lt. Benjamin Copley

### Academic Training Award

2nd Lt. Luke Haywas  
2nd Lt. Benjamin Copley

### Daedalian Award

2nd Lt. Derek Marchlewicz

### Citizenship Award

2nd Lt. Scott Thompson

## Special duty team to visit Laughlin

If you've ever wanted the opportunity to recruit sharp individuals into the Air Force as an Air Force Recruiter, or mold civilians into Airman as an Air Force Military Training Instructor, the AETC Special Duty Briefing Team can answer any questions concerning these challenging and rewarding careers.

The team will brief on all aspects of special duty opportunities at 8:45 a.m. Oct. 11 in Building 320, Anderson Hall. Applicant's spouses are highly encouraged to attend.

Airmen 1st Class with at least 24 months time in service through Master Sergeants with less than 17 years Total Active Federal Military Service are invited to attend the briefing and are eligible to apply for these special duty assignments.

The team can expedite the processing of an applicant's special duty application if they bring it with them to the briefing. To obtain a copy of the AETC special duty application, contact Tech. Sgt. Joel Langton at 298-4752.



## Johnnie Henson

Radar Maintenance Technician

47th Communications Squadron

**Hometown:** McLeod, Texas

**Family:** Wife, Brandi, and Son, Andrew

**Time in Military/Civil Service:**

Three and a half years active duty and one year, six months civil service

**Time at Laughlin:** Three years

**Greatest Accomplishment:**

Having a wonderful family and a great career

**Favorite movie(s):**

"Caddyshack"

**Hobbies:** Hunting and Fishing

**Bad habits:** Procrastinating

**If you could spend one hour**

**with any person, who would it be and why?:** My brother, because it seems like we never have time to just hang out.

**"Johnnie literally keeps planes in the sky by maintaining Laughlin's Air Traffic Control and weather radar systems. He's good at everything and won't stop until it's fixed."**

Matt Haven

Supervisor, Ground Radar Systems, 47th Communications Squadron



Photo by Senior Airman Olufemi Owolabi



# Stepping back

## Laughlin members relive history

**By Tech. Sgt.  
Joel Langton**  
*Public affairs*

Eight Laughlin Airmen and two civilians stepped into the history pages of pilot training and got the ride of a lifetime Monday in the front seat of a vintage biplane, thanks to the Red Baron Squadron.

A set of the Boeing Stearman biplanes touched down at 9:57 a.m. Monday on Del Rio International Airport's

runway. The red and white biplanes landed in formation with wingtips nearly touching. It was part of an effort by Red Baron to thank law enforcement and military for their recent Herculean efforts protecting America.

"America is the only country in the world where we could do something like we do, flying vintage aircraft around the country, and it's because of the men and women in the military and law enforcement that

Americans are able to have the freedoms we have," said Matt Losacker, pilot for the Red Baron Squadron.

First on tap were local law enforcement officials including the Val Verde County Sheriff, Del Rio Police Chief, the local Border Patrol Chief, and a local media member.

Then, Laughlin military members and two civilians assigned to the base got into the cockpits of the aircraft as they took to the skies over Del Rio and nearby Lake Amistad.

"It was neat, we got to do something a hand full of people get to do," said 2nd Lt. Ray Tansil, 47th Flying Training Wing executive officer. "Those planes were truly part of the Air Force, or Army Air Corps, history."

Nearly every American pilot who flew in World War II earned their wings in the Stearman. "There were nearly 10,000 of these planes produced," said Bryan Regan, demonstration pilot.

More pilots learned to fly in this plane than any other aircraft in history, said pilot Matt Losacker. After the war, many Stearman biplanes were used for crop dusting. Only about 2,000 are left on the books, he said.

The eight Laughlin members who got to experience the loops and barrel rolls, normally reserved for air shows, were awed by the display.

Fifteen minutes made a huge difference for the 47th Medical Group's Senior Airman. Robert Arrington. Airman Arrington was quiet and reserved before the flight,

pilots of the vintage aircraft, but it's amazing how much is the same," said Capt. Alicia Palmer, a former T-38 instructor pilot and B-1 pilot. "One thing is for sure though, we take a lot for granted today."

The differences were huge. The souped up Stearman, with a larger engine for air shows, was able to top out at 186 miles per hour and cruise along at 125 miles per hour. Capt. Palmer's B-1 was capable of speeds faster than 900 miles per hour.

*Air Force News Service contributed to this story.*

### More info

**More photos and video  
footage available from  
Monday's flights at:  
<http://www.af.mil/news/story.asp?id=123028310>.**

using the words excited and awesome with a straight face.

Afterward, he came out of the cockpit, waving his hands and called the ride amazing."

For Laughlin's pilots and instructor pilots, it offered an interesting perspective as well.

"There were certainly a lot of different stresses on the



**Pilot Bryan Regan, left, helps Senior Airman Robert Arrington, 47th Medical Group, with a parachute before his incentive flight with the Red Baron Pizza Squadron biplanes at Del Rio, Texas, Oct. 1. The Red Barons are vintage "Stearman" biplanes able to perform acrobatic stunts and are the longest-running, non-military air show act in history.**



**Pilot Bryan Regan, left, helps Mr. Jesse Valdez into the cockpit.**





Photo by Tech. Sgt. Joel Langton

Two historical biplanes sit on the runway as a nearly state-of-art helicopter zooms over, showing the difference in technology.



(Above) Some Laughlin instructor pilots and an Air Force photographer discuss aviation history with Matt Losacker, a demonstration pilot for the team. (Right) Red Baron Bryan Regan fills his aircraft's tank with some fuel before taking another Laughlin member for a climb and a roll.





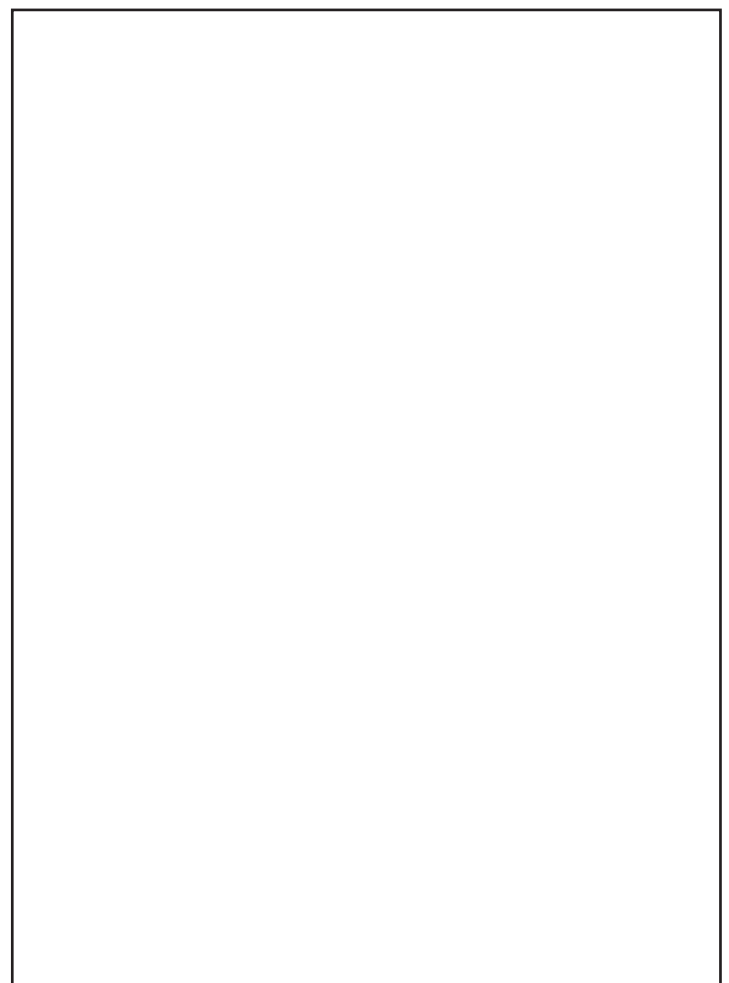
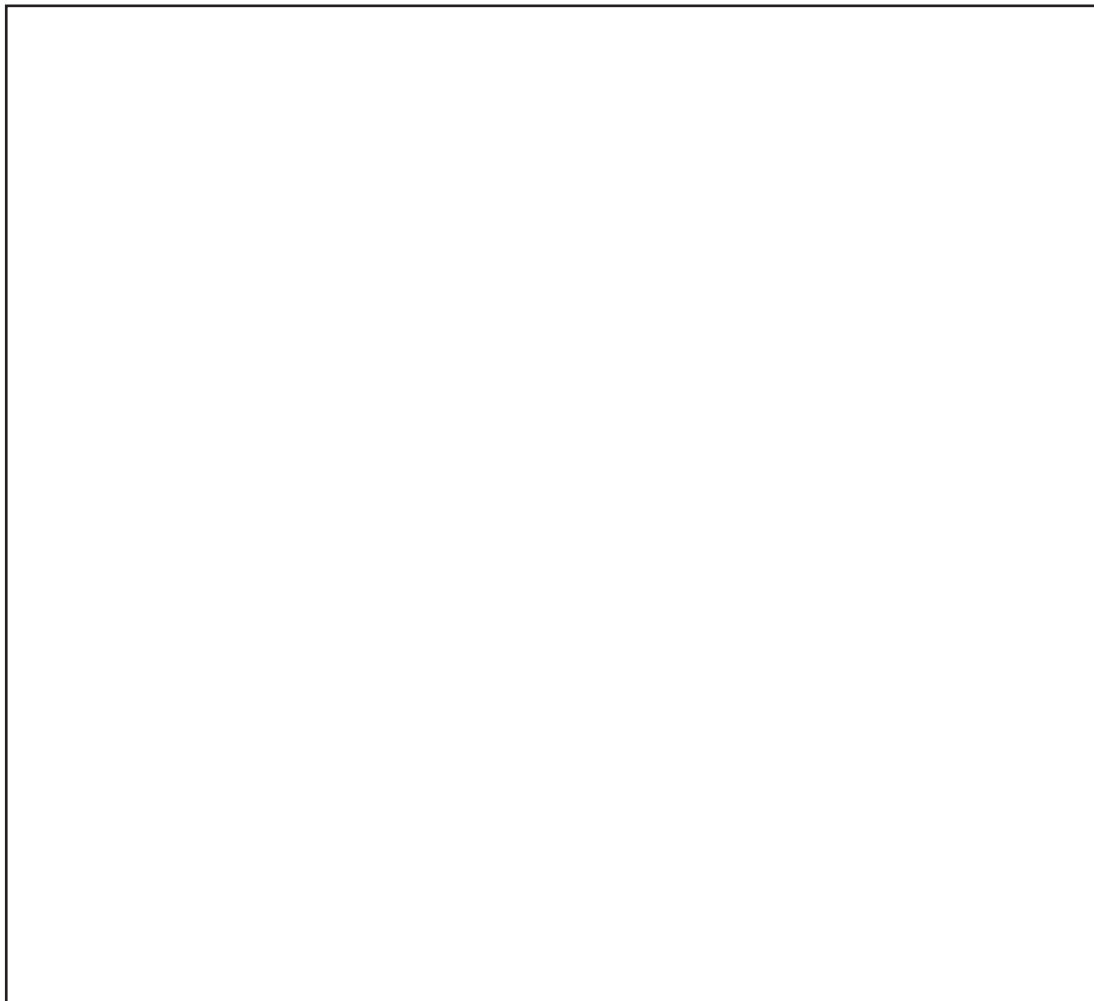


*Photos by Senior Airman Olufemi Owolabi*



## Live-fire training...

Lt. Col. Peter Bahm, 47th Civil Engineer Squadron commander, takes control of the fire truck and extinguishes a simulated aircraft fire during live-fire training near Laughlin's flightline Wednesday. The training, which was conducted by the 47th CES commander and Lt. Col. Dan Gernert, 47th Operations Group, was part of a mandatory firefighters' proficiency training.



# Tricare goes virtual

Waiting until the Clinic's appointment desk begins taking appointments and then sitting on hold for 10 minutes listening to music will soon be a thing of the past.

Tricare On-Line appointment scheduling will be available to TRICARE Prime enrollees Nov. 1.

Beginning Nov. 1, TRICARE Prime patients will be able to book all their medical appointments with the click of a mouse.

At some time in the future active duty members will be required to book all their appointments on-line with this state-of-the-art program. Beginning Nov. 1, active duty members are highly encouraged to use the on-line booking service. All TRICARE Prime beneficiaries are encouraged to use the on-line booking service Nov. 1.

Any TRICARE Prime customer can use the online booking. To do so, each family member, including children (regardless of age) must have their own password to meet privacy requirements. Patients can book up to two appointments per family member, up to 90 days out.

The new system will enable customers to take control of their healthcare. "When you make an appointment, you see what the appointment clerk sees," said Maj. Patricia Cifelli, healthcare integrator.

The Medical Group asks all active-duty members to register for TRICARE On line by Nov. 1 by

simply logging onto [www.tricareonline.com](http://www.tricareonline.com) and getting a password.

"People need to be ready to embrace this new customer service initiative," said Major Cifelli.

Once TRICARE ON-LINE is active, customers can still book appointments by calling between 8 and 11 a.m. and 1 until 2:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, for non-active duty TRICARE beneficiaries who do not have a computer. Emergencies are still handled by calling 911, or going to the Val Verde Regional Medical Center's Emergency room.

"Online appointments are one of the greatest benefits to Prime members," said Major Cifelli. "It's fast, convenient and private."

Checkout other services available to beneficiaries on-line, such as Personal Health Journal, Symptom Checker, RX Checker, 18 million pages of consumer health information, disease management tools, and Tricare claims and benefits information.

"Check it out and be ready for more ATSO 21 Initiatives as we streamline our services," said Major Cifelli.

If you need assistance with TRICARE ON-LINE, call 1-888-363-2273, press option 3. If your problem is unresolved, please call or email Capt. Jody Cowan at 298-6354 or Master Sgt. Alvarado at 298-6352.

*(Compiled from staff reports)*



*Courtesy photo*

## Highway pick up...

**Airman 1st Class Katrina Wells picks up trash during an effort to spruce up Highway 277. Airman Wells and 15 other members of the 84th Flying Training Squadron picked up 20 bags of garbage along two miles of Highway 277 North of Del Rio Sept 28.**